

A
BOOK
FOR
BEGINNERS:

Or, an Help to
Young Communicants;

T H A T

They may be fitted for the Holy
Communion, and receive it
with profit.

By *S. Patrick*, D. P.

The Twelfth Edition.

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A help
to
Communicants



Ingredere, ut Proficias.

A
BOOK
FOR
BEGINNERS:

OF THE
COMMON PRAYER

THAT

They may be fitted for the Holy
Communion, and receive it
with profit.

By J. W. WOOD, D. D.

Second Edition.

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at the Angel in
St. Dunstons Church, 1693.

TO THE
READER.

THere is no Advice
more wholesom or
more necessary, than that
of Solomon, in the con-
clusion of his Meditations
upon the Vanity of all
things under the Sun; Re-
member thy Creator in
the days of thy Youth :
Which may serve instead
of a Preface to this lit-
tle Book ; especially if I
A 2 change

To the Reader.

change one word, and make it run thus, Remember thy Saviour in the days of thy Youth.

Be sensible, that is, how much thou art indebted to Him; and do not forget it, but carry this always in thy mind, that as thou didst receive thy being from Him, so thou art bought with a great price; and therefore oughtest to glorifie God with Body and Soul, which are His, 1 Cor. 6. 20.

And do this betime, in thy best days; before thou

To the Reader.

thou art tainted and corrupted by Vice and Wickedness. Into which dangerous ways, if thou art so unhappy as to have entered, be advised, and leave them presently. Betake thy self without any delay to the service of God: and let no business, much less any vain pleasure, hinder thee from acquainting thy self with the Duty thou owest Him; or from performing it seriously; particularly that Duty which He hath commanded thee to do in Remembrance of Him.

To the Reader.

The Nature, the Necessity
and the Ends of which, to-
gether with the manner of
doing it, I lay before thee
in the following Pages.
Wherein I shall treat only
of such things as are most
easie, and obvious to every
capacity: hoping by God's
blessing, they will be useful
to such as will set them-
selves to consider them.

They that would have lar-
ger Instructions and helps,
may find them in the Chri-
stian Sacrifice.

CHAR.

CHAP. I.

Of the Duty.

WHen God's Minister declares, as he is required to do, that he intends on such a day to administer the most comfortable Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood; and invites you to it, beseeching you to dispose yourselves religiously and devoutly for it: you must consider that it is your duty to prepare yourselves, to come and partake

take of so great a Blessing ;
and not to think it enough
that you have been pre-
sent at Divine Service, and
heard the Sermon, and
then may turn your back
on the Table of the Lord.
Which is a very great dis-
respect to Him, and for-
getfulness of Him, and
cannot be excused so easi-
ly, as Mens naughty hearts
incline them to believe.
For though God's Good-
ness is such, that He pre-
fers works of Mercy to
your Neighbours, before
Sacrifice to Himself, when
one of them must be omit-
ted : Yet he doth not make
the same *allowance* for your
Worldly business, (which
well

of Communicating. 3

well may be let alone till another time;) much less for your vain Pleasures or Recreations, which never ought to hinder or put by this or any other holy duty in the season proper for it.

Come therefore, as oft as you are invited ; and when God's Minister, after Sermon ended , goes up to the Holy Table to prepare this Heavenly Food for you, (that is, to consecrate Bread broken, and Wine poured out, that it may represent the death of *Christ* to you ; and to give it you, saying, *Take, eat, and drink this in remembrance of Christ*) do you stay in God's House,

4 *The Duty*

and draw near unto his Table, and thankfully receive it from him, for that end for which he gives it, in commemoration of *Christ's* Death and Passion upon the Cross for your sake.

It is the Duty of God's Minister, to set the Bread & Wine apart; to present them unto God, to break the one and pour out the other, to bless them, and to give them unto you: And then it is your duty, to look upon this Bread and Wine, thus blessed, as representing *Christ* unto you; and accordingly to receive them, not as meer Bread and Wine, but

of Communicating. 5

but as things deputed by
Christ to be instead of his
Body and Bloud, and to
communicate them to
worthy Receivers.

CHAP. II.

*Of the Necessity of this
Duty.*

TO do thus you are in-
gaged,

First, By the express
Commandment of our
Lord Christ; which you
find four times recorded
in the New Testament:
by the three first Evange-
lists,

6 The Necessity

lists, S. *Matthew* 26. 26, 27. S. *Mark* 14. 22, 23. S. *Luke* 22. 19, 24. and by S. *Paul*, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, 11. 23, 24, 25. All which places, especially the last, you will do well to read seriously. And then consider,

Secondly, That there is the greater regard to be had to this Commandment [*Do this in remembrance of me,*] which Saint *Paul* saith he received of the Lord, because it was his last and dying Commandment, in the Night when he was betrayed, just before the day of his Passion. We are wont,
in

of the Duty. 7

in other cases, to be inclined to remember, and carefully perform the last desire of a dying Friend : And therefore what other account can we give of it, if we live in a neglect of this Duty, so solemnly enjoined, but that we are strangers, or, at best, very cold in our love to him ? which you had need to quicken ; because,

Thirdly, Your care in this Duty will be a means to make you observe the rest of his Commandments better ; which now, alas ! are little regarded, because little or no regard is had to this last Commandment ; which our
Lord

8 *The Necessity.*

Lord seems to have added, when he left the World, for the security of all the other that he had delivered before. For the doing this hath a mighty Power in it to stir up the love of Christ in our hearts. And the love of Christ constraineth us, (as St. Paul teaches, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.) because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them, and rose again. Do this therefore in remembrance of Him, which is such an efficacious means to

of the Duty 9

to make you always do well. Yea, more than this,

Lastly, It will be a means to make you observe his Commandments *with love and delight*: which if they be wanting, your Obedience will be little worth. For without *Love*, all that you do will not be acceptable to Christ; and unless you delight in what you do, it will not be acceptable to your selves. But neither of these will be wanting, if you religiously frequent this Holy Sacrament; where He is represented to you as desirous to save you, though it were by dying for you; saying,

10 *The Necessity, &c.*

saying, when this was first propounded to him, *Lo, I come, I delight to do thy Will, O God.* How can you then refrain, when you think of this, from expressing the same affection and the same joy, when it is so much easier for you to do God's Will, than it was for him to suffer such things as he did, in obedience to it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

*Of the Ends for which it
was instituted.*

YOU will be the more inclined to this, when you consider the Ends for which this Commemoration of *Christ's* Death was ordained. Which were such as these:

First, To profess that you are Christians, and believe that Religion which *Christ* hath sealed by his Blood, to be the true and only way to happiness; and that you mean to continue in it, whatsoever it costs

12 *The Ends*

costs you, though it should ingage you, that is, to follow him to his Cross.

Secondly, To give thanks to God the *Father*, for sending his only begotten Son into the World, to be the Propitiation for our Sins:

And to God the Son our Blessed Saviour *Jesus Christ*, for humbling himself so low, as to die the death of the Cross; where he offered his own Body, to put away our Sins by the Sacrifice of himself.

And to God the *Holy Ghost*, who hath brought us glad tidings from Heaven, since our Saviour's Ascension thither, that having

of its Institution. 13

ving purged our Sins by himself, He sate down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; where he lives for evermore, and is mindful of us and of his Promises, which he will certainly fulfil, as we see by these Pledges he hath left us of his endless Love. And therefore,

Thirdly, You bind yourselves, by the remembrance of these things, to be faithful to him, and to keep that holy Covenant, wherein you are solemnly tied to be wholly His. For as the very coming to his Table, naturally signifies you are of his Family, and belong to Him:

14 *The Ends*

Him : So being there so kindly entertain'd by him, you stand bound to behave your selves as his Servants, or rather Friends ; and engage so to do. Now ye are his Friends, if you comply with his 'will in all other things, as well as in this of commemorating his dying Love for your sake. So he himself tells his Apostles, in those memorable words, *John 15. 13, 14.* where he represents to them, in what consisted the greatness of his Love, and the sincerity of theirs : *Greater love hath no man than this, That a man lay down his life for his Friends. Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever*

of its Institution. 15

soever I command you. For,
Lastly, Being thus of
the number of the Faith-
ful, you have, in this
holy Sacrament, Com-
munion with *Christ* in his
Death and Passion, and
in the Merits of them.
For though the things you
receive be *in themselves* but
Bread and Wine; yet by a
Divine and Spiritual Grace,
they become the Body and
Blood of *Christ* to the
Faithful, who are thereby
made partakers of all the
Benefits which he purcha-
sed, by his Sacrifice which
He made of himself for
our Sins. Thus one of
the Prayers after the
Communion excellently
instructs

16 The Ends

instructs you, ' That God
 ' vouchsafes to feed those
 ' who duly receive these
 ' holy Mysteries, with the
 ' *spiritual food* of the most
 ' precious Body and Bloud
 ' of his Son our Saviour
 ' *Jesus Christ*; and doth
 ' assure you thereby of
 ' his favour and good-
 ' ness; and that you are
 ' very Members incorpo-
 ' rate in the mystical Bo-
 ' dy of his Son, which is
 ' the blessed Company of
 ' all faithful People; and
 ' are also Heirs, through
 ' hope, of his everlasting
 ' Kingdom, by the Merits
 ' of the most precious
 ' Death and Passion of his
 ' dear Son.

222

of its Institution. 17

I need not add that, by doing this in remembrance of him, you have Communion with all your Christian Brethren, (for it is already expressed;) and that you beg his gracious assistance, that you may continue (as it follows in the Prayer now mentioned) in this holy Fellowship, and do all such good works as he hath prepared for us to walk in: for this holy action being *a Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving*, (as it is in the Prayer going before,) wherein *Christ's* Sacrifice is commemorated; it is in its own nature the most powerful
Prayer

18 *The Ends, &c.*

Prayer, (as all Sacrifices were (1 Sam. 13. 12.) more powerful than any other can be) to supplicate for, and to impetrate (that is, obtain) the Divine Blessing upon us.

CHAP. IV.

Of Preparation for it.

THIS may suffice, one would think, to excite all those who have any care of their future Salvation, or present satisfaction, to make it their business to prepare themselves, to be worthy Receivers of such great Benefits.

And

Preparation, &c. 19

And that is not hard to do.

For, having learned your *Catechism*, or the short *Instruction* in the Common-Prayer-Book; to be learned by every Person that is baptized; and then seriously considered the Promise that was made at your Baptism in your name, which is there explained; you should, in the next place, take the first opportunity to have the benefit of *Confirmation*: Wherein you both openly renew the solemn Promise and Vow made in your name at your Baptism, ratifying and confirming the same in your own Person,

B

and

20 *Preparation*

and acknowledging your self bound to believe and do all those things which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you ; and also by the Laying on of Hands have more of the Divine Grace imparted to you, to confirm and strengthen you in your Christian resolution, that you may continue his for ever.

After this you may, without any scruple, look upon your self as having a right to the Sacrament of *Christ's* Body and Bloud. And the best preparation to it will be,

I. To

for the Communion. 21

I. To endeavour faithfully to live according to your Baptismal Vow. And for that end, to call to mind every day how solemnly you did such a time, in the presence of God and such a Congregation, ratify and confirm that Vow; and also promised, that, by God's Grace, you would always labour to observe such things as by your own confession you have assented unto.

They are these *three*:
First, that you should 're-
'nounce the Devil and all
'his Works, the Pomps
'and Vanities of this wick-
'ed World, with all cove-
B 2 'tous

22 Preparation

‘ tous desires of the same,
‘ and the sinful Lusts of the
‘ Flesh; so that you will
‘ not follow, nor be led
‘ by them. *Secondly*, That
‘ you should believe all the
‘ Articles of the Christian
‘ Faith. And *thirdly*, That
‘ you should keep God’s
‘ Holy Will and Com-
‘ mandments, and walk in
‘ the same all the days of
‘ your Life.

I I. Now those Com-
mandments which you
have promised to keep, you
are taught afterward, con-
tain *your Duty towards God,*
and your Duty towards your
Neighbour.

Your Duty towards
God, you are instructed,
is

for the Communion. 23

is this: To believe in Him,
to fear Him, to love Him,
with all my heart, with all my
mind, with all my soul, and
with all my strength, to wor-
ship Him, to give Him
thanks, to put my whole trust
in Him, to call upon Him, to
honour his holy Name and his
Word, and serve Him truly
all the days of my life.

Then follows your Duty
towards your Neighbour,
in these words, as you
your self are taught to con-
fess;

*My Duty towards my
Neighbour is, To love him as
my self, to do to all men as I
would they should do unto me:
to love, honour and succour
my Father and Mother;*

24 Preparation

to honour and obey the King;
and all that are put in au-
thority under him; to sub-
mit my self to all my Gover-
ners, Teachers, spiritual Pa-
stors and Masters; to order
my self lowly and reverently
to all my betters; to hurt no
body by word or deed; to be
true and just in all my deal-
ings; to bear no malice nor
hatred in my heart; to keep
my hands from picking and
stealing, and my tongue from
evil speaking, lying and slan-
dering; to keep my body in
temperance, soberness and
chastity; not to covet nor
desire other mens goods, but
to learn and labour truly to
get mine own living, and to
do my duty in that state of
life

for the Communion. 25
life unto which it shall please
God to call me.

All these things you
promised with your own
mouth, before God and
his People, (when you
were confirmed) that you
would be careful to ob-
serve : and must there-
fore make this the con-
stant Rule of your Life ;
and call upon God, by di-
ligent Prayer, for his spe-
cial Grace, without which
you will not be able to
serve him.

Which if you do sin-
cerely, then,

III. I would advise
you, every Evening, be-
fore you go to sleep, to

B 4

take

26 *Preparation*

take some time to think how well you have kept your Resolution, and observed this Rule : And where you find you have fallen short of it, or done contrary to it, to make a new Resolution to be more careful the next day. And if you be able to set down in writing those Negligences, or breaches of your Covenant with God, when you take notice of them ; you will have the less to do when the opportunity of communicating approacheth : For then,

IV. *Lastly*, You can with much ease examine
your

for the Communion. 27

your selves before the Communion, and have a full account of your life and conversation ready at hand. About which you will be lamentably puzzled, and long in drawing it up, if you do not constantly make some observation how things go with you: but in this Method shall be able presently, and without any perplexity, to understand certainly and clearly in what case you are. And so you have nothing farther to do, by way of Preparation to the Sacrament, but only, *first*, sorrowfully to bewail your Sinfulness, and to confess your selves to

28 Preparation

Almighty God : and that, *secondly*, with a full purpose of amendment of life, and of greater diligence and watchfulness hereafter ; especially in those particulars wherein you have miscarried. (For sorrowful Confession and Affliction of Spirit for your Sins, is not sufficient ; but must end in this unfeigned Resolution,) And if you find, *thirdly*, that your offences are not only against God, but also against your Neighbours ; then (as you are directed in the *Communion-Service*) to reconcile your selves unto them : Being ready to make restitution and satisfaction,

for the Communion. 29

faction, according to the utmost of your powers, for all injuries and wrongs done by you to any other; and being ready likewise to forgive others that have offended you, as ye would have forgiveness of your offences at God's hand.

When all this is done, then you ought not to discourage your selves with a fancy of your unworthiness to partake of that Holy Table to which you are invited. For you will always be unworthy in the strictest sence of the word, but are really worthy in Gods account, when you are thus disposed; and sensible, at the best,

30 Preparation

of your unworthiness of such great Blessings, as God of his goodness, is desirous to bestow upon you.

Nor ought those words of *S. Paul* to affright you as I find they have done many, 1 Cor. 11.29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

For First, the Damnation here spoken of, or Judgment (as it is in the margin of the Bible) is not unto eternal Death; but unto sicknesses, weaknesses, and temporal Death at the most; as appears from the following words, v.30. which

for the Communion. 31

which I desire you to read with the other. And *secondly*, even this *judgment* might have been prevented if the Church had done its duty, and exercised its censures upon particular offenders; as appears by the next words, *ver. 31*. And *thirdly*, this Divine *Judgment* whatsoever it was, unto which they were condemned, was intended as a mercy to them on whom it was inflicted, *ver. 32*. But (*fourthly*) they who are prepared in such manner as I have directed, need not fear so much *Damnation* or *Judgment*, as this comes to; for they do *examine themselves*, and *discern*

32 *Reparation, &c.*
cern the Lord's Body, un-
derstanding what they go
about; and so are not li-
able to that Sentence of
Condemnation, which the
Apostle threatens to those
who were not thus dispo-
sed.

CHAP. V.

*A Prayer for that Morn-
ing when you intend
to receive. Which
may be used any
time before.*

BEside those usual Pray-
ers wherein you con-
stantly recommend your
self

A Prayer. 33

self to God, and give him thanks for his daily benefits, it will be fit to make a particular application of your self to Him, for his gracious assistance and his blessing upon you in that holy Duty, after this manner :

O Lord, I most humbly abase my self before thee, confessing that I am unworthy of any of those mercies which I enjoy, in common, with the rest of thy Creatures. For I have too much forgotten thee my Creator, and Jesus Christ my Redeemer; when I have many ways offended, either through ignorance, or negligence, or wilful

34 *A Prayer.*

wilful sins. [Here mention the particulars out of your daily observations.]

And yet so great is thy Goodness, thou art pleased to give me an opportunity to partake of thy extraordinary love and kindness in thy dear Son, the Lord Jesus. For I am invited by his Minister, to come and feast with Him at his Table, by a thankful Commemoration of the offering He made of his own Body and Bloud, upon the Cross for us.

And I am very desirous to go, if Thou wilt but be pleased graciously to pardon all my past offences, either against Thee, or against my Neighbour; and to accept of my

A Prayer. 35

my hearty sorrow for them,
and unfeigned resolution to
do my endeavour to amend
them.

O be merciful unto me,
be merciful unto me, I
most humbly beseech thee, for
the sake of Jesus Christ who
died for me. And though
I am unworthy so much as,
at any time, to approach into
thy presence; yet do not re-
ject me now, but permit me
to come even unto thy holy
Table.

For which, if I am in any
measure prepared, it is to be
ascribed to thy Grace, which
hath wrought such good dis-
positions in me; and there-
fore will, I hope, still so as-
sist me, that I may not be
an

36 A Prayer.

an unwelcom guest unto thee;
but be filled with such a lively
sense of thy Love to me,
and with such a sincere and
ardent Love to Thee, and with
such satisfaction of heart in
being one of thy Servants,
that I may be more sorrowful
than ever, that I have of-
fended Thee, and more sted-
fastly resolved to be strictly
obedient to Thee.

And, O most gracious God,
let me find, I beseech thee,
all such godly Resolutions
in me more confirmed and
strengthened by the heavenly
Food Thou hast prepared for
me. O that (as I stand al-
ready engaged by former
Vows which I have upon me,
so) I may faithfully and
cheerfully

A Prayer. 37

cheerfully obey Thy holy will in all things, and daily increase in Thy holy Spirit more and more, until I come to Thy everlasting Kingdom.

Hear me, O Lord, and help me so to perform my duty in every part of that holy action, which I am going to do in remembrance of my Saviour, that I may not only at present rejoice in his Love to me, but be excited thereby to do the rest of my duty better, and with more delight, all the days of my life. Which I humbly beg through his Merits and Mediation; to whom, with thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, glory and praise both now and for evermore. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

*The manner of Re-
ceiving.*

THUS I have led you to the Holy Communion ; and now you will expect I should instruct your Behaviour there. I know no plainer or more natural method, than to direct you what to do in every part of that Divine Service.

When the Sermon therefore is done, and you are conveniently placed ; that you may lose no time, (while the Minister is making himself ready, and the

The manner, &c. 39

the Congregation that doth not receive is dismissing) repeat the Prayer above-written, or some part of it.

When you see the Minister going up to officiate, say,

Blessed be the Lord for his Ministers, the Stewards of the Mysteries of God : especially for those faithful and wise Stewards, whom the Lord hath made Rulers over his Household, to give them meat in due season, *Matth. 24. 45. 1 Cor. 4. 1.*

When

40 *The manner*

*When he begins the Offer-
tory, say,*

Let every one of our
Prayers, together with
our Alms and Oblations,
come up for a memorial
before the Lord : Whose
holy Angels I believe are
present at these Solemn-
ties.

A poor Servant may add :

The Lord accept of my
poor Mite, who have lit-
tle to offer, but my self,
and all that I can do;
which I dedicate to his
service.

Then

of Receiving. 41

Then awaken your self, to accompany the Minister in the Prayer for the whole state of *Christ's Church*, &c. and attend diligently to the following Exhortation, which begins with these words, *Dearly beloved in the Lord*; which the Minister ought to speak, and you hear, with much affection.

Then join as heartily & earnestly as you are able, in the *general Confession*; and receive the *Absolution* (with the *comfortable words* of *Christ* and his Apostles that follow after) as you would do the most joyful news in the World; stirring up your selves (as the
the

42 *The manner*

the Minister exhorts you, when he saith, *Lift up your hearts*) to bless and praise the Lord, together with all the heavenly Host, for such everlasting Consolation and good hope, as He hath given us, through his grace in *Christ Jesus*.

For those precious Promises ought to be sweeter to you (as the Psalmist speaks) than the Honey and the Honey-comb; far dearer than thousands of Gold and Silver. And now you may be assur'd (though unworthy to gather the Crumbs under his Table) that, receiving the Creatures of Bread and Wine, according to *Christ's* Institution,

of Receiving. 43

tion, in remembrance of his Death and Passion, you shall be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood. Unto which words, in the Prayer of Consecration, say secretly to your self, *Amen, Amen.*

When the Minister himself Communicates, say,

The Lord hear thee. The Lord remember all thy Offerings, and accept thy Sacrifice: Grant thee thy heart's desire, and fulfil all thy Mind. The Lord fulfil all thy Petitions, both for thy self and for us, and for all his People.

C

When

44 *The manner*

When you are going to approach to the Lord's Table,

Propound to your self, by way of question, the Invitation which the Minister hath given you, saying, Do I truly and earnestly repent me of my Sins? and am I in love and charity with my Neighbours? and intend to lead a new life, following the Commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways?

(And finding your self able to return the answer of a good Conscience, resolve, as it there follows,) Then I will draw near with Faith,

of Receiving. 45

Faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to my Comfort.

*When you are placed there,
say,*

Lord, what am I, that thou should'st be thus gracious to me? What an honour is it, that I am invited hither to feast at thy Table, upon the Body and Blood of my Blessed Saviour? To receive the pledges of his Love, and to ingage my love to him? which I desire may abound more and more towards him, and towards my Christian Brethren, and towards all men.

46 *The manner*

When the Minister hath delivered thee the Bread, concluding in these words, [--- Feed on him in thy Heart by Faith with thanksgiving,] say,

I do believe, O Lord, that thou art the Bread of Life, which came down from Heaven, by whom we are nourished to eternal Life. And I thank Thee, with all my Soul, that thou hast both taught us the way of God in truth; and also died for our Sins, and rose again to give us hope of that immortal Life. Blessed be thy Name, I have now,
by

of Receiving. 47

by thy own appointment,
received the sacred pledge
and earnest of it: Where-
fore my Soul doth magni-
fie the Lord, and my Spi-
rit rejoiceth in God my
Saviour. Whose Grace I
trust will be with my Spi-
rit, that I may rejoice in
the Lord alway, and ever
delight in all well-doing:
Amen.

Or this,

I believe, O Blessed Je-
sus, that thou art the
Lord of all; and give
thee most humble and
heartly thanks, for calling
me to the knowledge of
thy Grace, and to Faith
C 3 in

48 *The manner*

in Thee, beseeching Thee that as I have now receiv'd this new token of Thy love, (blessed be thy goodness,) so thou wilt ever be my God, and by continuance in well-doing bring me to everlasting Life. *Amen.*

A shorter after the Bread.

I thank thee, O Lord, for calling me into this state of Salvation, and for giving me this new pledge of thy continued Love. Assist me with thy Grace to do my Duty to Thee and to my Neighbour so faithfully, that I may abide in thy love for ever, through *Jesus Christ, &c.*
After

of Receiving. 49

After you have received the Cup, when the Minister concludes, with those words, [-- And be thankful,] say,

I thank Thee, O Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou would'st condescend to take our Nature upon Thee, and therein suffer for our Sins; yea shed Thy precious Bloud upon the Cross for our Redemption. Glory, honour, blessing and praise be unto Thee, O Lord; to whom, in all reason, I ought henceforth to live, and not unto my self. And therefore here I devote my self to thy faithful service;

C 4

vice and resolve, if need be, even to take my Cross, and follow thee. Assist me, good Lord, and make me partaker of all the benefits of thy Death and Passion; according as thou seest me sincerely resolved, in all things for ever to obey thee. *Amen.*

Or this,

Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thy sin, and hath now filled thy mouth with good things: and who giveth thee hope
of

of Receiving. 51

of better in eternal Life.
Sanctifie me wholly, O
Lord, that I may not fall
short of it; but my whole
Spirit and Soul and Body,
may be preserved blame-
less unto the coming of our
Lord Jesus. *Amen.*

A shorter after the Cup.

I thank thee again, O
Lord, for thy wonderful
love in sending thy Son
to lay down his Life, and
in making me partake of
the Benefits of his preci-
ous Blood shed for us:
Preserve in me for ever a
sense of thy Love; and
thereby preserve me holy
and without blemish to the
second coming of our Lord
Jesus. *Amen.*

C 5

After

52 *The manner*

*After you are gone from the
Lord's Table, to your
Seat, say,*

Blessed be the Lord, for
his exceeding great Grace
and Mercy to us in *Christ
Jesus*. Blessed be the Lord
who hath called me into
Fellowship with Himself,
and with his Son *Christ
Jesus*. Blessed be his Name
that I have now received
the Tokens of his endless
Love; in which I ought to
rejoice without ceasing, as
more valuable than all the
goods of this World.

It is my joy, O Lord,
my highest satisfaction I
have in this World, that I
am

of Receiving. 53

am beloved of Thee, who art able to make me more happy than I can conceive: O preserve me for ever in thy Love; and for that end preserve in me the same thoughts, resolutions, and devout affections, which I now feel in my heart.

Keep them alive by the powerful assistances of thy holy Spirit; of which thou hast given me an assurance in thy precious Promises, and in these sacred pledges of thy loving kindness. For which I again most humbly thank thee, and desire I may never forget how much I am indebted to

54 *The manner*

thee; but be still praising thee, and saying,

*I will extol thee, my God,
O King of Heaven, and I
will bless thy Name for ever
and ever.*

*Every day will I bless thee,
and I will praise thy Name
for ever and ever.*

*While I live, will I praise
the Lord: I will sing praises
to my God, while I have any
being.*

*My mouth shall speak the
praise of the Lord: and let all
flesh bless his holy Name for
ever and ever. Amen.*

*While others are Communi-
cating, you may say,*

*Preserve us all, O Lord,
pure and acceptable Sacri-
fices*

of Receiving. 55

fices unto thee; that we may be all presented spotless before the presence of thy glory with exceeding joy.

Or this,

As we, being many, are one Bread and one Body; (for we are all partakers of that one Bread, and have drunk of the same Cup,) so help us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace; and to love one another with a pure heart fervently.

Or this, Rom. 15. 5, 6.

*Now the God of Patience
and Consolation grant us to
be*

56 The manner

be like-minded one towards another, after the example of Christ Jesus.

That we may with one mind and one mouth glorifie God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This may be added.

Let all the People praise Thee, O God, let all the People praise Thee.

From the rising of the Sun unto the going down of the same, let the name of our Lord be praised.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore.

Upon

*Upon Christmas-day and
seven days after, you may
add this to your other De-
votions.*

More particularly I now
remember, O Lord, thy
stupendious Love, in send-
ing thy Son, so unexpect-
edly, to visit us, when the
World thought not of
Thee, but were strangers,
or rather Enemies unto
Thee. Blessed be the Lord,
who hath so highly ho-
noured our Nature, as to
dwell among us, and to
appear in the likeness of
sinful flesh. Preserve in
me such a remembrance of
it, that I may never dis-
honour

38 *The manner*

honour him nor my self,
by consenting to any fil-
thiness either of the flesh
or Spirit: but alway be-
have my self suitably to
the relation I have unto
him, in Righteousness
and Holiness before him
all the days of my Life,
Amen.

*Upon Easter-day, and seven
days after.*

I bless thee, O Lord,
who hast fulfilled thy pro-
mise unto our Saviour,
that thou would'st not leave
*his Soul in Hell, nor suffer
thy Holy One to see corrup-
tion.* Blessed be God, who
hath thereby confirmed our
Faith

of Receiving. 59

Faith in the Promises He hath made to us. *This is the day [or time] the Lord hath made; I will rejoice and be glad in it.* This is the day when my Saviour was begotten again from the dead; and thereby hath begotten us again unto a lively hope of immortal Life. *This is the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. The Lord hath shewed us light; even the light of life.* I will offer to him therefore perpetually the sacrifice of righteousness, together with these Sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, for his mercy towards us; which I see by this, endureth for ever.

Upon

60 *The manner*

*Upon Ascension-day and
seven days after.*

Blessed be God, that I
see *Jesus*, who was hum-
bled a while and made
lower than the Angels,
for the suffering of death,
crowned now with glory
and honour. Lift up my
heart, O Blessed *Jesus*,
to that high and holy
place, where thou art
exalted; and keep it fix-
ed there. That setting
my affections on things
above, where thou art at
God's right hand, I may
never do any thing that is
unworthy of my Christian
Profession: But have my
Conver-

of Receiving. 61

Conversation in Heaven;
from whence I expect thee,
O Blessed *Jesus*, who hast
told us, Thou art only
gone before to prepare a
place for us.

Where thou art, O blef-
sed Lord, there let me be
also: And at last change
this vile body, that it may
be fashioned like unto thy
glorious body, according
to the working whereby
Thou art able even to
subdue all things unto thy
self.

*Upon Whitsunday and six
days after.*

I reioice in the comfort
Thou hast brought us, O
holy

62 *The manner*

holy spirit of Grace: I re-
 joice to hear (as thou
 hast testified by the won-
 derful gifts bestowed on
 the Apostles) that my
 dearest Saviour is alive;
 and that he lives for ever-
 more; and will never cease
 his Love to us, till we be
 there where he is. O in-
 spire me more and more
 with thy Heavenly Grace,
 that being stedfast in this
 Faith, I may bring forth
 all the fruits of the Spi-
 rit; and not only resist,
 but overcome all Tempta-
 tions in my way to Heaven,
 Guide me by thy Coun-
 sel, strengthen me with
 thy Might, support me
 with thy Comforts in all
 necessities,

of Receiving. 63

necessities, streights and dangers; that I may at last safely arrive at eternal glory. *Amen.*

*Upon the Feast of Trinity
only.*

Adored be the incomprehensible Majesty of the eternal undivided Trinity, in whose name I was Baptized; and whom I humbly worship with praises and thanksgivings, saying,

Blessed be thy Name, O God the Father Almighty the Creator of Heaven and Earth; in whom we all live, and move, and have our being.

And

64 *The manner, &c.*

And Blessed be the Eternal Son of the Father, our Saviour and Redeemer, the Prince of Peace, who hath purchased an Eternal Redemption for us.

And blessed be the holy Ghost the Comforter, who inspires me with good thoughts, pious desires, and godly resolutions; and will conduct me, I hope, unto everlasting Life.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

*Meditations and Prayers
afterwards.*

IF there be more time left, before all have communicated, (as there is generally on these great Festivals, and where many receive upon other days) you may spend it in Meditating, as well as you are able, upon the Ends for which this Sacrament was ordained. Turn to the third Chapter of this Book and there read them in order.

I. Say-

66 Meditations and

I. Saying to your self when you think that you have now solemnly owned your self to be a Christian, &c.

O Lord, truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant; I am sensible that I am not my own; for I am bought with a great price, and therefore ought to glorifie God in my Body and in my Spirit, which are God's.

And, good Lord, assist me (as becomes one who names the name of Christ) to depart from all iniquity.

II. And when you think of the next thing (how thankful you ought to be to God the Father, Son, and

Prayers afterward. 67

and Holy Ghost,) you may easily turn those words you read there into a Thanksgiving : or have some such short Ejaculation as this :

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? especially for this, That he hath not spared his own Son, but delivered him up for us all?

III. To which you may give an answer, when you think of the *Third* thing, [your Fidelity to him] saying,

I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.

68 Meditations and

*I have inclined my heart
to perform thy Statutes al-
ways, even unto the end,
Psal. 119. 106, 112.*

*It is reasonable that what-
soever I do in word or deed, I
should do all in the Name of
the Lord Jesus, giving thanks
to God and the Father by
him, Col. 3. 17.*

*IV. And when you think
(lastly) of having Commu-
nion with him, say,*

*What greater happiness
can I wish, than to be one with
Christ? and to be made par-
taker with him in the Merits
of his Death? whereby I am
sure that I shall partake with
him in the glory of his Resur-
rection.*

*By this I know that I dwell
in*

Prayers afterward. 69

in Him, and He in me, because he hath given me of his Spirit.

O make me, blessed Lord, more and more one with thee, by making me more perfectly of the same mind, spirit, and disposition with thee.

A Prayer at home on that day.

If you be by such means as these duly affected with our Saviour's Love towards you, the remembrance of it will not presently slip out of your mind; nor will you be willing to part with it. And while it continues there, it will make all your Christian Duty easie and delightful; and it will

70 *Meditations and*

be a hard matter to persuade you to offend him. Do not fail therefore to endeavour to preserve it, by affecting your heart again with such thoughts as these; repeating some time or other on that day the foregoing Meditations, and adding this Prayer.

I can never thank thee enough, O Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort, for the innumerable Benefits I have received from thy bounty; and therefore ought to take all opportunities to bless thee, and to speak good of thy Name; especially now that I have newly tasted how gracious thou art, in giving thy

Prayers afterward. 71

thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance, in that Sacrament which I have this day received.

When I think only what a kindness it is, that I have my daily bread, and never want things convenient for the support and comfort of this present life; I find that I am indebted to thee upon that account, exceedingly above all that I can express: But that thou art pleased to admit me to thy own Table, and there entertain me with the blessed hope of being with my Saviour where He is, and rejoicing with him for ever; Lord, how much doth it sur-

72 Meditations and

pass the highest of my thoughts; and with what delight and satisfaction ought it to fill my heart?

Possess me, I beseech thee, most merciful Father, with such a lively sense of this Love, that I may never forget how happy I am, in being so nearly related to Christ Jesus: But always account it such an honour to be one of his Servants, that I may constantly and cheerfully obey him; and delight in this, and all other Duties of a Christian Life.

It is a great favour, I ought to be sensible, that I may have the liberty alway to resort unto him, as my most gracious Lord and Master:

Prayers afterward. 73

ster ; and enjoy him not only in the publick Offices of Religion, but here at home in these private Addresses unto him. O that by all such means I may grow more like him ! and carry away such a resemblance of his Holiness, Goodness, Humility, Meekness and Patience, that every body may see I have been with Jesus !

O that there may be such a pious sense of his Love, and such devout affections towards him left in my heart ; that I may not content my self meerly with my daily Prayers, much less with these present Expressions of Love to him ; but it may be my constant care every

74 Meditations and

day to approve my self to him
so faithfully in all well-doing,
that I may not be afraid to
appear again before him, at
the next invitation I have to
his Table.

And let the hearts of all
those who have this day de-
voutly attended on thy Ser-
vice, be joyful and glad in
thee. Help us all to keep
our selves pure and undefiled,
and to walk so steddily in the
fear of God, and in the com-
fort of the Holy Ghost, that
others seeing our good Con-
versation in Christ, may be
in love with Religion, and
glorifie thee our Heavenly
Father.

Have mercy also (as we
have this day most humbly
prayed)

Prayers afterward. 75

prayed) upon the whole Church : And so rule the hearts of thy chosen Servants William and Mary ; our King and Queen ; that in all their thoughts, words and works, they may ever seek thy honour and glory ; and study to preserve thy People committed to their charge, in wealth, peace, and godliness. And grant also unto all them that are admitted into the Fellowship of Christ's Religion that they may eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, for thy dear Son's sake Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

76 Meditations and

If this seem too long, here follows a shorter.

I prostrate my self here again before thee, O Lord of Heaven and Earth, to bless and praise thee for all thy Mercies towards me; especially for those which thou hast this Day bestowed on me.

I would not be so ungrateful as presently to forget such a wonderful Grace as thou hast vouchsafed me: but desire most earnestly to have a lasting remembrance of it in my heart, provoking me to love and to good Works.

And for that end I now renew my humble supplications

Prayers afterward. 77

cations unto thee, that thou wilt constantly excite and assist me by thy Holy Spirit, to walk worthy of my high and heavenly Calling in Christ Jesus, by such a sober, righteous and godly Life, adorning his Doctrine in all things, that he may own me for his good and faithful Servant at that great Day, when we shall see him not in these shadows and figures of him, but face to face.

And have mercy upon thy whole Church. Whose Prayers I beseech thee to hear for every Member of the same: more especially for our Sovereign, and all that are in authority under him: that by their pious care and

78 *Meditations, &c.*

*watchfulness, thy Church
may joyfully serve thee in
all godly Quietness, through
Jesus Christ our Lord. A-
men.*

CHAP. VIII.

*Directions for a godly
Life, suitable to this
holy Communion.*

I. **T**AKE some time e-
very day to call
to mind how much you
stand engaged to our Sa-
viour Christ: *First*, by
your Baptismal Vow. *Se-
condly*, by your solemn
Rati-

Directions for, &c. 79

Ratification of it at your Confirmation; and, *Thirdly*, by your renewing it lately at the Holy Communion, when you Professed how much you were indebted to Him, both upon the account of his offering Himself upon the Cross for you, and of his giving Himself there again to you.

II. If these three come into your mind as soon as you awake in the Morning, it will be a great security to you. And to make your self more sensible of your Obligation, you may begin the Day with this Reflection. *I*

am

80 *Directions for*

am not my own, but the Lord's. He hath bought me with a price, and I have devoted my self again and again unto him. Therefore I will glorifie him with Body and Soul, which are his.

Or to affect your heart the more, you may put it thus: *O how happy am I in being ingaged to serve such a gracious Lord and Master as Christ Jesus! I will never lose this Happiness by being unfaithful to him, and unmindful of his Love.*

III. To keep your self stedfast in this Resolution, read seriously every day *your Duty to God, and*
your

a godly Life. 81

your Duty to your Neighbour,
as they are plainly set
down in the Church-CAT-
TECHISM, [See p. 23.
of this Book.] And say
at the end of it, *This I*
have promised, this I have
vowed when I became a
Christian, this I have again
confirmed, and this by God's
Grace I will faithfully per-
form.

IV. And resolve at the
same time to be *watchful*
all that Day; especially in
those things wherein you
observed (at your last ex-
amination of your self)
you have been most de-
fective, and most apt to
be

82 *Directions for*

be surpris'd. Excite your self therein to use greater diligence, and set a stricter guard upon your heart; carefully avoiding such places, company, and occasions, as have been wont to indanger you. And call your self to an account at Night; according to the Advice, p. 33. of this Book.

V. There is no body, sure, so employed, but may find time for such short Exercises as these. In which if they would be serious, and not slubber them over too fast; they would find the happy fruit of them in their hearts and lives. And to make them

a godly Life. 83

them the more effectual,
add this *short Prayer*, as oft
as you can, every day.

*Almighty God, who hast
given thine only Son to be un-
to us both a Sacrifice for Sin,
and also an Ensamble of god-
ly Life; give me grace that I
may always most thankfully
receive that his inestimable
Benefit, and also daily endea-
vour my self to follow the bles-
sed steps of his most holy Life,
through the same Jesus
Christ our Lord. Amen.*

VI. If your Business be
such, that you cannot eve-
ry day read over your *Du-
ty to God*, and your *Duty
to your Neighbour*; do not
fail

84 *Directions for*

fail to do it once or twice a week: And pause a while at the end of every particular, saying, *This is my Duty; this I will do by God's Grace.* And at the end of all (to make your reading the more effectual) say, *I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that he hath called me (upon these terms) into the state of Salvation: and I beseech him to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end.*

VII. Resolve also by this means to fit your self to receive the *Holy Communion* as often as you can: remembering that, as by Baptism

a godly Life. 85

Baptism you are made a Member of *Christ*, and enter into the state of Salvation; so by this Communion with him, you continue in that Blessed State, which they cannot justly pretend unto, who constantly neglect to *do this in remembrance of Christ*. They give no sufficient Testimony that they are of the Christian Society; nor have any reason to look upon themselves as living Members of *Christ*, and in a state of Salvation.

At best they are but half Christians, being only Baptized into *Christ*; but having no Communion
with

86 *Directions for*

with him in the other Sacrament which he hath appointed, and which their Baptism ingaged them to receive.

VIII. And if you do not come up to your Resolution in every thing, but find rather you have several ways failed in the performance of your Duty to God and your Neighbour; *let not that hinder you from going to the Communion*, when you have opportunity. But only humble your self the more before God by unfeigned Repentance, and go to strengthen your Christian Resolution. by Receiving
the

the Spiritual Food which *Christ* hath prepared for you; and beseech him to impart more spiritual strength unto you.

IX. And if you still start back again, *let not that discourage you*, nor make you think you shall never grow better: But hope in God rather, that by the constant and frequent use of this and all other holy means, you shall at last be stedfast and unmoveable in well-doing. You will never be so, if you leave off to communicate; but you will grow more and more careless in other things: and therefore

88 *Directions for*

therefore continue to do this, as *Christ* bids you; and do it for this end, that you may tie your self faster to him, and increase in power and strength to have Victory, and to triumph over the Devil, the World and the Flesh.

X. And lastly, *be not hindred by Doubts and Scruples* (wherewith many are wont to perplex and dishearten themselves) from receiving the benefit of frequent Communion. I have not room to consider them all in this little Book; but if any person cannot in this way, which I have directed, satisfie his Conscience, let him

him not fail to follow the Counsel which is given him in the Communion-Ser-vice, which is, to go to his Guide, or some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief to him; that by the Ministry of God's Holy Word he may receive the benefit of Absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his Conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.

And to excite you to this, consider with your self, how much more reason you have to be afraid of staying away, than you have to be afraid of going to the Communion; there being

98 *Directions for, &c.*

being a plain Command for your receiving it; and nothing but your own fears and scruples to keep you from it.

CHAP. IX.

Doubts and Scruples.

IT will do some service, perhaps, to well-disposed Souls, if I shew how easily some of their most common Scruples may be satisfied (if they will but advise with God's Ministers about them;) though I cannot insist upon all the causes of their Doubtfulness. I will bestow this Chapter therefore upon that business.

I. We

I. We hear ordinarily this objected to us, when we tell men of their neglect of this Duty, *I do not delight in that, nor in other holy Duties; and therefore to what purpose is it to do them?*

The plain Answer is this; If you prefer the doing of your Duty before your Pleasure, or your Gain, then you cannot but take a rational satisfaction (if you understand your self) in what you have done.

Nay, if you consider it well, you will have a high satisfaction, proportionable to the greatness of the pleasure, or the world-

E ly

92 Touching Doubts

ly Advantage, which you denied for God's sake.

Who, you must remember, is satisfied in your doing what you can, (especially when you are tempted another way;) and therefore so should you be too:

Hoping that by constant practice of Vertue, he will give you that Delight in it, which you desire.

I am sure this is the way to get it, if it be to be had.

II. Others complain of a great *Dulness* that is upon them in holy Duties; which makes them have no list to them.

This

This doth not differ much from the former; and therefore I shall only add, that when you have taken all the pains with your self which I have directed in the foregoing Chapter, you ought not to be troubled at your dullness: but ascribe it either to your natural Constitution, or to some present Indisposition of Body. Neither of which is in your power to remedy; but only to submit unto and endure with patience.

In short, let not this afflict you, much less hinder your Communicating; if by your receiving the Holy Communion, you

94 *Touching Doubts*

find that you are made more careful in your constant Duty.

III. But the greatest Discouragement of all is this, *I do not profit by the Holy Communion, nor grow one jot the better by receiving it so often.* Which language is not more common, than it is for the most part causeless. For as many people think they do grow better, when they do not; so others think they do not, when they do; because neither of them know what it is to be better.

Examine your selves therefore by your *Duty to God,*

and Scruples. 95

God, and your *Duty to your Neighbour*; and try whether they be better performed or no, since you received the Holy Communion.

Let *poor Servants*, for instance, examine whether they order themselves more lowly and reverently to all their betters; and be careful to be just and faithful; to govern their Tongues also, and to abstain from evil-speaking as well as stealing, &c. And more especially, whether they grow more contented in that State and Condition of Life, into which God hath been pleased to call them. These

96 Touching Doubts

are substantial Signs of growing better, by which you make a true judgment of your selves: and either be rid of your Scruple, or know how to be rid of it, by endeavouring seriously to improve in such Vertues.

In like manner, Children should examine themselves about the same Reverence and Lowliness; and whether they honour their Parents more than heretofore; and submit themselves to all their Governors, Teachers, and spiritual Pastors, or Masters.

And all Young People should examine whether they keep their Bodies more

more strictly in temperance,
sobriety and chastity; be-
cause they have greatest
temptations to the Vices
that are contrary to these
Christian Duties.

And here it will befit
to mention one thing of
which many complain,
That they are troubled with
the motions of carnal Lusts,
unto which Youth is natu-
rally prone.

The Answer is, That
it cannot be otherwise, if
they be in Health, and
therefore, there needs the
greater care and dili-
gence to preserve them-
selves pure and undefiled.
Which they may do,
though they feel such mo-

98 *Touching Doubts*

tions, if so be they do not follow them, nor suffer themselves to be led by them to any act which God hath forbidden.

That's all you promise in Baptism, *To renounce the Lusts of the flesh, so as not to follow them, nor be led by them.* Lusts, that is, Desires you may have, and will feel and they cannot be perfectly subdued: But they do not defile you, if they do not obtain your Consent to them. And all you have to do, is, To refuse to follow them whither they would carry you; and to resolve not to satisfy them in any way, but that which God allows.

And

And after the same manner you must examine your selves about your *Duty to God*. Whether you believe more heartily and firmly what *Christ* hath taught you in his Gospel, and are verily perswaded of it, so that you fear to offend Him; and esteem his promises far above all Riches; and think your selves exceeding rich in Faith and Hope, though otherwise you be poor and low in the World. *These are the best signs of improvement.*

100 *Directions in case*

CHAP. X.

Directions in case of frequent Relapses into Sin.

BUT suppose a Man frequently relapse into those Sins which he constantly resolves against, and solemnly promises to forsake; what shall be done in that case?

To this I answer;

I. That as it is his Duty to judge and condemn himself severely for it: so I think this ought to be a part of the Sentence he pro-

of frequent Relapse. 101

pronounces against himself, to judge himself unworthy, to partake of the holy Communion. For so the Church would judge, if it knew what he was, and did exercise its discipline upon such Offenders.

II. And therefore, looking upon himself to be as vile as a Dog that returns to his Vomit, let him accordingly refrain from the Table of the Lord, till he be sufficiently humbled and so sensible of his Sin, and of his Danger, as to grow more careful, and better resolved.

VI E 6 III. Which

102 Directions in case

III. Which it is to be hoped he will be, if he for this reason, and no other, forbear to approach thither; because he looks upon himself as too vile to enjoy such a privilege; not staying away out of carelessness, and lothness to take pains with himself, much less despair of God's Mercy; but meerly out of a sense of his Underservings, and by way of deep humiliation, and to punish himself for making no better use of his Saviour's Love and Kindness to him.

III. Which

IV. If

IV. If this will not do, he must add some extraordinary means of afflicting his Soul, as the Scripture speaks; by judging himself unworthy to eat or drink, or enjoy any of the good things of this World: and accordingly casting down himself upon the Earth before God, with fasting, weeping, and mourning; bewailing and lamenting his sad Condition, as we are wont to do a Friend when we fear he is a dying, or in great danger of it.

V. And if still he find he is not safe, he must
after

104 *Directions in case*

after all advise with some discreet Minister of God's Word, as with a Spiritual Physician; desiring to know what course to take, that he may get the Mastery of those unruly Lusts, which are too hard for him.

VI. And when he comes for this ghostly Counsel and Advice, let him not be ashamed plainly to confess his Sins, and to open the whole state of his Soul before him whom he consults; relating how, and by what means, he comes to be thus intangled in the snare of the Devil, that he cannot get out of it.

of frequent Relapse. 105

VII. Be sure you conquer the lothness you will find in your self to make this Discovery, for fear it disgrace you in his Opinion. And convince your self, that you ought the rather to confess your sins ingenuously, that you may take shame to your self, and lay your self low in the presence of God and his Minister.

Do it as a part of your Humiliation.

VIII. Whereby he will be able to judge what Remedies are most proper for your Cure, when he knows

106 *Directions in case*

knows the cause and the root of your Disease. When you deal sincerely with him, he will be able to tell you of what nature and degree your Sin is, and whence it proceeds: whether it be from idleness, or ill company, or carelesness in your Devotion, or neglect of serious thoughts to quicken your belief, to call to remembrance your obligations, and to put your self in mind of the great account you must give; or from too much confidence of your self, want of Fear and Caution, not watching over your Eyes, or the door of your Lips, and abundance

of frequent Relapse. 107

bundance of other such like things ; which he may observe, and accordingly give you his Directions.

IX. And be sure you submit to his Prescriptions, and be very careful to follow them : for this is the last Remedy ; which you ought to use with thankfulness to God for it, and with fear and trembling lest ye should not be the better by it.

Suppose a Man had the Falling-sickness, what would he not give, or do, or suffer to be freed from it, rather than be in continual danger of falling into the fire, or water, or other

108 *The Duties*

ther mischief? Make this
your own case: for your
frequent falling into Sin,
notwithstanding your re-
solutions and engagements,
is far more dreadful and
dangerous, and no means
ought to be refused for a
cure of so great an evil.

CHAP. XI.

The Duties of Children.

THIS Book being inten-
ded for Beginners,
and such as may be suppo-
sed to have least know-
ledge of their Duty; I shall
conclude it with a few Ad-
vices to Children, to poor
Servants,

of Children. 109

Servants, and to all sorts of *Young People*.

The Duty of *Children* is comprehended in two words, to *honour*, and to *obey* their Parents. Therefore remember,

I. It is your Duty to *Honour your Parents*; which is the first of all the Commandments of the Second Table: And consists,

1. In an esteem of them as your Superiours and greatest Benefactors; because, under God, they were the Authors of your Being, and took care of your Education, when you could not look after yourselves.

2. In

110 *The Duties,*

2. In a reverent behaviour towards them, even when they do not perform their Duty; but provoke you to wrath, by their peevish crosness.

3. In requiting their Love, by supplying their necessities, if they fall into a low condition, and you be able to support them. Read 1 *Tim.* 5. 4. *Matth.* 15. 5, 6.

4. In bearing with their Infirmities, either of body or mind; especially in their old age, or declining years.

II. *Secondly, Obey your Parents,* (*Ephes.* 6. 1.) so as to be subject to them.

Luke

of Children. 111

Luke 2. 51. That is,

1. Be subject to their good instructions and admonitions; to which you ought to listen diligently.

2. To their commands; when they bid you do any thing that is not contrary to the Divine Commandments.

3. To their Corrections also for your faults; to which you ought reverently to submit, *Heb. 12. 9.*

4. And to their directions also about the choice of your Calling; if you have not a natural aversion to it.

5. But

112 *The Duties*

5. But especially in the business of Marriage; in which Parents have always had a right to dispose of their Children: Not indeed to force them to marry one whom they cannot love; but to oblige them to endeavour to love those whom they recommend to their choice.

And when you cannot bring your self to a compliance with their desires in that point; you must with due reverence and respect dissent from them, and humbly beseech them to press you no farther.

If they will not hearken to your repeated requests, you are not bound (or rather,

rather, you are bound not) to follow their directions in such a case. But on the other side, do not marry any body else, without their consent; unless they be so unreasonable, that they will let you marry none at all; and you find a necessity of it, to prevent your being led away, contrary to your Vow in Baptism, by fleshly Lusts.

In that case repair to the Magistrate or your Minister, (who are *common Parents*,) and let them deal with them, and if they cannot prevail, I have no more to say about your Obedience in this particular; use your liberty prudently;

114 *The Duties*

dently, and with good advice of Friends, and due respect to your Parents.

But (as the Common-Prayer-Book exhorts you in the office of *Matrimony*,) Do not enterprise nor take in hand such a weighty thing as *Marriage*, unadvisedly, lightly or wantonly, meerly to satisfie carnal lusts and appetites; (like brute Beasts that have no understanding;) but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, and in the fear of God, duly considering for what ends it was ordained: and then you cannot do amiss.

Be careful in the performance of these Duties; and God (before whom
such

such things are good and acceptable) will give you his Blessing. Read *Ecclesiasticks* 3. to v. 17.

CHAP. XII.

The Duties of Servants.

THough *Servants* be not now meer Slaves and Bondmen, as they were in the Apostles days; yet they are in a state of Subjection, and are tied to such Obedience as we find enjoined in the Apostolical Writings; even for this Reason, Because they are now in a far
F better

116 *The Duties*

better condition. Hearken therefore to your Duty, as it is plainly set forth in the Holy Scripture. And remember,

I. First of all, that you are bound to study to please your Masters and Mistresses, by doing as they bid you, in their business wherein they imploy you, *Tit. 2. 9.* A branch of which is, (as you will find in that place) not to contradict them, and stand disputing with them. Much less ought you to be faucy and irreverent in your Answers, or in your Behaviour towards them, *1 Tim. 6. 1.*

II. Re.

II. Remember also to be Faithful in your trust, and never to deceive them, in the smallest matter; but be sure to shew all good Fidelity, as the Apostle there teaches you, Tit. 2.

III. Part of which Fidelity is, to be diligent in your business, and to dispatch it as soon as you can: and to be solicitous also to do your work well; which S. Peter and S. Paul seem to mean, when they bid you serve them with all fear, 1 Pet. 2. 18. and with fear and trembling, Ephes. 6. 5.

118 *The Duties*

The best Rule of which is this, To think with your selves, how you would wish others should behave themselves towards you, if you were Masters, and they Servants : And do you just so, now that you are Servants to your Masters.

IV. And both this Diligence, and Solitude, and Trustiness, must be performed, not only when they have their Eye upon you ; but when their back is turned ; and they are absent from you, *Ephes. 6. 6. Colos. 3. 22.* If you gad abroad, or slacken your Labour and Care, when they

of Servants. 119

they are not at Home, or do not see you; you do not serve them as Christians, that study to please God, but as vile Slaves, and Men-pleasers, that mind nothing but to avoid their anger.

And here it will be fit to give you this caution; That you *never tell a lye, to save your selves a chiding.*

V. Be content also with your Allowance; and submit to such Restraints as they lay upon you: which seems to be included in the Apostolical Precept before mentioned, *Ti. 2. 10.* For, more than this, you ought to take their

120 *The Duties*

hard words, nay and corrections, patiently. I cannot say, but you may seek a remedy from your Governours and theirs, if they abuse you; but a Blow that does not hurt, much more an angry Chiding should not seem any great matter to you: But you had better bear it, saying nothing, or meekly praying them to spare you, than increase their wrath by answering again angrily. Howsoever all ill words are utterly unlawful. Read *i Pet. 2. 18.*

VI. The Apostle also would have you to serve them *with good will*, Eph. 6. 7.

of Servants. -121

6. 7. and, *Whatsoever you do, to do it heartily*, Coloss.

3. 23. One note of which is, when you go about your business chearfully, and do not grumble at your work; much less grumble at this, that you are Servants, and not as good as those whom you serve. But take care to be as humble as your condition.

It is very uncomfortable to your Masters, as well as your selves, when you go about your work with a discontented Spirit, and a sour heart, lowring and pouting, as we speak: which proceeds from hence, That you forget you are serving the Lord,

122 *The Duties*

when you are diligent in their business; and look upon your selves only as Servants of Men. This the Apostles correct, when they bid you be obedient to your Masters, *as unto Christ*: Not with Eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ; doing the will of God from the heart: With good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men, Eph. 6. 5, 6, 7. Where he four times (within the compass of three Verses) puts you in mind of this, that you are doing God's Will, and serving the Lord Christ; when you are doing their business, which they enjoin you, faithfully.

If

of Servants. 123

If you think of this,
you will not go about it
heavily and discontented-
ly: especially if you con-
sider the motive whereby
the Apostle encourages
you; *Knowing that whatso-
ever good thing a Man doth,*
(though in the meanest
place,) *the same shall he*
receive of the Lord, whether
he be bond or free, Ephes.
6. 8. Knowing that of the
Lord ye shall receive the re-
ward of the inheritance: for
ye serve the Lord Christ,
Col. 3. 24.

F 5 CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

*Advices to all Young
Persons.*

IT is of the greatest
consequence, to begin
well. And therefore at your
first setting out into the
World, take a special care,
lest you contract any evil
Habit; especially of Adul-
tery, the bane of Youth:
and lest you entertain any
prejudices against things,
before you be able to
judge; as we see too ma-
ny have done against the
Common-Prayers of the
Church; which they ab-
hor

Young People. 125

hor they know not why,
meerly from an early dis-
gust they took to them,
before they could distin-
guish between good and
evil.

II. And check your de-
sire of *Pleasure*, which now
above all other times will
intice you: and of *No-
velty* also, which is com-
prehended in the *youthful
Lusts*, as we render the
words, spoken of in 2 *Tim.*
2. 22. unto which mankind
is strangely prone in their
inconsiderate age, loathing
ancient Forms, and cra-
ving new Entertainment
for their fancies.

F 6 III. *Avoid*

III. *Avoid Harlots and all unclean Persons, as you would the Plague: remembring the repeated cautions and admonitions, which the Wise Man gives to his Son about this matter. Read them seriously Prov. 2. 18, 19. Prov. 5. 3, 4, 5. Prov. 7: the whole Chapter, and follow his Councils, lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, saying, How have I hated Instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined my Ear to them that instructed me?*

Young Persons. 127

IV. In order to Chastity, *be exactly temperate* in meat and drink. Drink no Wine; which will add fire to fire: Study hard, or use your selves to labour and watchings: Avoid all provocations to your carnal appetite.

V. Take heed what *Friendships* you contract: for Youth is prone to familiarity, and thereby drawn easily into ill Company.

VI. *Reverence your Elders,* Levit. 19. 32. 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6. particularly your Tutors and Guardians, who are instead of Parents.

Which

Which reverence is to be expressed not meerly, by your outward behaviour, and in your Language; but in desiring their Advice, hearkening to their Counsels, enterprizing nothing without their Direction, and submitting to their Reprehensions.

VII. In order to which, be sober minded, as S. Paul exhorts you, *Tie. 2. 6.* Whereby he means either *Seriousness*, and the study of *Discretion*; or *Humility* and *Modesty*. Which *Modesty* is an exceeding great Ornament of Youth; an indication also of a good Mind, and an hopeful blossom

Young People. 129

some of excellent fruit; as
one of the Ancients speaks.
But it doth not consist
merely in your Looks;
but in your low opinion of
your selves, sense of your
imprudence and weakness,
and in an humble attention
to the Opinions and Coun-
sels of your Elders.

Finally, remember
that Youth is like the
Spring time, which will
soon be over; and if you
only play in it, and take
no care to sow good seeds
of Wisdom and Piety, you
will lose the opportunity
of making provision for a
happy life.

Of

130 *Advices to, &c.*

Of this you are in great danger ; because there is nothing to which young Men are more prone, than to squander away their time. Be serious therefore and considerate, that you may not be undone by the folly of Youth : which, as *Solomon* notes, inclines Men so eagerly to follow their own humor in every thing, that they do not love to have any check in their Mirth and Jollity.

That which will check them most, is, the thoughts of the future, especially the remembrance (as he there observes, *Eccles. 11: 9.*) of the account they must make. And therefore

Directions for, &c. 131
fore I conclude with that
advice:

*Rejoice O young Man, in
thy Youth, &c. But know
that for all these things God
will bring thee into Judg-
ment.*

CHAP. XIV.

*Directions about them
that cannot read.*

I. **A**S for those who
cannot read them-
selves, (which in our days
are but few, Blessed be
God, in comparison with
former Ages,) their Ma-
sters, or their Mistresses,
or

132 *Directions for such*
or their Fellow-Servants,
or some good Neighbour,
or Relation, are desired
to be so charitable, as to
read to them their duty
about this matter: shew-
ing them the necessity, and
the ends of it; and pray-
ing them to mark and ob-
serve what is read,

II. Or if their Memo-
ries be very weak, tell
them in short, That they
are bound by their Vow in
Baptism to do God's Will, and
keep his Commandments: and
that this is one of his Com-
mandments, that they should
commemorate his Love, by
coming unto the Holy Com-
munion, which will help them

as cannot read. 133
to do the rest of his Will better.

III. Read to them also their *Baptismal Vow*; together with their *Duty to God*, and their *Duty to their Neighbour*, as it is laid down in the Catechism: and ask them, if they intend to do all this by God's gracious assistance.

IV. If they consent to it, tell them they ought to go and receive *Confirmation*, as was said before: and then go to the Holy Communion to thank God for calling them into this state of Savation by *Jesus Christ*, and for working such a good will in them; and

134 *Directions for such*
and to promise him that
they will continue his
faithful Servants to their
lives end.

V. And let them know,
that if they can do no more
at the Holy Communion,
but only give God thanks
heartily for sending his
Son to die for them; and
devote themselves unto
Him in resolution of sin-
cere Obedience; it will be
acceptable to Him: and
in time they will under-
stand more, and do this
Duty better.

V I. Therefore teach
them, that the thoughts
of their imperfections, and
ignorance, ought not to
discourage them from
coming

as cannot read. 135

coming to the Communion, for the very doing of that which *Christ* commands, I mean the Ministers taking Bread and Wine, blessing them, breaking the one, and pouring out the other, giving them to his People, and their receiving these in remembrance of his Death and Passion, is a thing in it self grateful to him. And if they know thus much, and with honest hearts give thanks to God, and promise him to be his faithful Servants; he will take it kindly, and increase his Graces in their hearts.

VII. And they may tell them, That since they cannot read, they must be
the

136 *Directions for such*
the more diligent in at-
tending to what is read in
the Church or in private ;
and to the Sermons they
hear preached : laying up
the principal things they
observe, carefully in their
hearts ; that they may find
them there upon occasion.

VIII. For which end
Masters and Mistresses
should take care, their
Servants may have time to
go to Church : or rather,
they should see them go,
and bring them thither ;
saying with the holy Man
of God, *I and my house will*
serve the Lord.

IX. And

as cannot read. 137

IX. And if they would help them to learn some short Prayer by heart, besides the Lord's Prayer, it would be a means to possess them with a sense of their Duty, and to make them more confident of God's gracious assistance in the doing of it. Instruct them, at least, after you have read to them their Duty to God, and their Duty to their Neighbour, to say, *Lord, have mercy upon me; and write all these thy Laws in my heart, I beseech thee:* and this Collect,

O God, whose Blessed Son was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the

138 Directions for such
the Devil, and make us the
Sons of God, and heirs of
eternal Life; grant me, I
beseech thee, that having this
hope, I may purifie my self,
even as he is pure; that when
He shall appear again with
power and great glory, I may
be made like unto him in his
eternal and glorious King-
dom; where with Thee, O
Father, and thee, O Holy
Ghost, be liueth and reign-
eth ever one God world with-
out end. Amen.

X. There is reason Ma-
sters and Mistresses should
be at this pains with their
Servants who cannot read;
if they consider how much
better Servants they will
be

be to them, when they are become the Servants of God : and that they themselves have a Master in Heaven, who expects they should not meerly use their Bodies well, but look also after their Souls ; so far at least, as to help them to the means of Christian Instruction.

This is a thing, indeed, much neglected ; and if their work be but well done, some Masters and Mistresses concern themselves no farther. But such persons plainly declare, That they love themselves better than God ; else they would not be satisfied till God's work was
G done

140 *Directions to those*
done also, and carried on
together with their own.

CHAP. XV.

*Directions to those that
can read.*

I. **A**S for those who
are able to read,
I need not, sure, advise
them to use that ability;
but only to use it well;
avoiding vain and idle (e-
specially all *filthy*) Books,
and being conversant in
those that are good and
profitable; such as will
improve their *minds* in use-
ful knowledge, or excite
in

that can read. 141

in them devout *affections* towards God, or direct them in the *practice* of Justice and Mercy, of Temperance and Chastity, and of all other Christian Vertues.

II. But above all other Books; acquaint yourselves with the Holy Scriptures; which *Timothy* (S. Paul says) *had known from a Child*; and were able to make him wise unto Salvation; through Faith which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 3. 15. Which is a high Commendation of the *Old Scriptures*, and a great encouragement to study those Holy Books; from whence

142 *Directions to those*

We may reap the greater benefit, now that we have the *New Scriptures* added to them, which contain *the Faith in Christ Jesus*, which the Apostle speaks of.

You do but pretend to love God, (which you acknowledge is a part of the Duty you owe Him,) if you do not seek after his mind and will, which is only to be found in the *Holy Scriptures*.

III. And of all other parts of the Scripture, I have observed young People delight (as it is natural to do) in reading the *Historical Books* of the
Old

that can read. 143

Old Testament. Which truly are writ with such a Spirit of Piety, as is to be found in no other History; designing visibly these two things. *First*, to instill into the People a belief of Divine Providence, which governs all things; and presides not only over Nations, but particular Persons: who therefore ought to have God in all their thoughts, to whom all events are ascribed by the Holy History. And, *Secondly*, To nurse them up in a sense of the difference of Good and Evil: the former of which always received remarkable testimonies of God's Favour;

144 *Directions to those*

and the other was ever attended with the effects of his severe displeasure.

IV. Do not think therefore that you have profitably read these Books, unless you come away from the reading of them more sensible of these two things, and more affected with them. Possessed, that is, with a more lively apprehension of God's overruling Power and Providence, whereby all things are disposed: and therefore resolved to commit your selves unto him in well-doing; and to make that difference between Good and Evil that He doth;

that can read. 145

doth; resting satisfied with what he is pleased to order, when you have taken care to order your selves so, as to avoid what he hates, and to follow that which he loves.

V. But above all other Books of the Old Testament, the *Psalms* are of most general use : and therefore ordered by our Church to be read over publickly once every Month. Some of which you would do well to get by heart, that you may say them upon all occasions, as anciently they were wont to do: nothing being more ordinary than to hear the

146 *Directions to those*
Husbandman chanting
them as he followed the
Plough, the Seaman as he
sat at the Helm, the
Waterman at his Oar, the
Weaver at his Loom, the
good Housewife at her
Spindle or her Wheel;
nay, the poor Ditcher sang
them at his Spade, and
the very Children in the
streets. In short, they suckt
these in with their Mothers
Milk, and from their very
Infancy, as soon as they
could learn any thing,
were taught a smattering
of them, before they could
speak perfectly: such a
love they had to the sweet
Musick of these holy Songs.

VI. The

that can read. 147

VI. The very first of which will put you in mind of your Duty; and of the Happiness it will bring you, if you do it faithfully. Let that therefore, and the rest that are of most general use, (and relate not meerly to *David's* present condition, or to some publick calamity,) be read most frequently, and pondered most seriously. Such are the 8, 15, 19, 33, 34, 103, 104, 119, 139, 145. with many others, which every one may observe for his own use: particularly the seven Penitential Psalms; which are most proper when you are in a sad af-

G 5 flicted

148 *Directions to those*
slicted condition, or be-
wail any sin you have com-
mitted, to which they
may be also applied. They
are the 6, 32, 38, 51, 102,
130, 143.

VII. But when all this
is done, you must chiefly
read the Books of the *New*
Testament, or Covenant
made with us in *Jesus*
Christ: to which the Books
of the *Old Testament* re-
ferr you, as the perfection
of that Knowledge which
was but obscurely deli-
vered by them. And first,
the *Holy Gospels*, which
most contain the Histo-
ry of our Saviour's Birth,
Life, Death, Resurrecti-
on,

that can read. 149

on, and Ascension : In all which principally observe the mighty power of God, giving Testimony unto him, and declaring him to be the Son of God. Whom therefore you are bound to obey ; and in order thereunto study what his Will is ; which is most fully delivered in the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in the 5, 6, and 7. Chapters of *S. Matthew*. Read these at least once a Week.

VIII. Then follow the *Acts of the Apostles* ; which abundantly declare their Authority, by whose Ministry we have received the
G 6 Gospel ;

150 *Directions to those*
Gospel; and bid us attend
to their Instructions, which
are left us in their *Epistles*,
as the words of Men Di-
vinely inspired. And in
these content your selves
with those parts of them
which are most easie and
plain, and of general use
and concernment: And
meddle not presently with
those which are hard and
obscure, and which re-
late to some particular
cases, which now are not
so well known, as to make
their sence apparent to e-
very one. For it is a very
ill sign, when you stand
puzling your selves about
some dark passages in the
Apostolical writings, when
there

that can read. 151

there are plain ones in abundance to exercise your Thoughts. I will direct you to some, that will be fittest for your Meditation. In the Epistle to the *Romans*, read often the 12, and 13 Chapters; with the 13th. of the first to the *Corinthians*; the 4, 5, 6, to the *Ephesians*; 3, and 4, to the *Colossians*; 4, and 5, of the first to the *Thessalonians*; and (to omit others) the 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 13, of the *Hebrews*, the whole Epistles of S. *James* and of S. *Peter*.

And when you read them, let it be with a design to grow better, rather than more knowing.

And

152 *Directions to those*

And then think you grow better, when you are made more humble; more sensible of God's love, and your own undeservings; more thankful, more meek and patient; more submissive to God's Providence, and to your Governors, whether Civil or Spiritual, Private or Publick.

IX. When you are thus disposed, by these and such like Christian Vertues, you may venture to read the harder parts of Scripture; and not be in danger to wrest them (as those do who are settled upon no Principles) to
your

your own destruction. For then you will not be forward to frame a sence of those places out of your own head: but confess your ignorance; and look upon them as containing things not necessary to be known: for all necessary things are plainly set down; and perhaps some of those very things about which you trouble your selves, are elsewhere delivered in clearer words. As you may be satisfied if you take the next opportunity, to consult with those whose lips are to preserve knowledge.

Which is the best way to be resolved in such cases.

X As

154 *Directions to those*

X. As for other good Books, besides the Scripture, you may find some time to read them. And the less you have on other days, spend the *Lord's Days* and other *Holy Days* the more seriously in this Work. When I would advise you to read 5, 6, and 7th. of *S. Matthew*; with some part of the *Whole Duty of Man*. And when you have made some proficiency in Knowledge, read Doctor *Hammond's Practical Catechism*; where you will find that Sermon of *Christ's* upon the Mount expounded.

XI. But

XI. But whatsoever godly Book you read, whether the Holy Scriptures or any other, be sure you endeavour to come away bettered by the reading of them. For if you get no good by them, that very thing will incline you, at last to slight and neglect them, as many do, we see, the hearing of good Sermons, because they do not perceive that they or others are at all the better for them; but after much hearing, there is little doing of God's Will.

But this the Scripture it self foretold, and hath exactly described such people,

156 *Directions to those*
ple, as are ever learning,
but never able to come to the
knowledge of the Truth,
2 Tim. 3. 5, 6, 7. and in-
tended hereby to breed
in every one of us a due
caution, lest we be of
that unprofitable number.
Which you must prevent,
by being more serious,
attentive and diligent in
reading Holy Books for
that end for which they
were writ: And hearing
Sermons, not for fashion-
fake, but that you may be
taught or remembred of
your Duty; and excited
or directed to do it with
greater care and constan-
cy.

XII. And

that can read. 157

XII. And if you meet with the very same thing over and over again, either in reading or hearing; do not therefore nauseate it, or grow weary of it, or pass it by hastily and carelessly: But rather look upon it as a very useful Truth, of which you have great need, because it comes so often in your way; and thankfully acknowledging that God is very kind to you (in putting you so frequently in mind of that which is so necessary to your Salvation) give the greater heed to it, and ponder it with
such

158 *A qualification*

such seriousness, as a thing of that moment deserves.

CHAP. XVI.

*A necessary qualification
to receive benefit by all
this.*

IF every one had so much *Humility*, and such a hearty desire to be truly good, wrought in their Souls betime, they would read and hear God's word to better purpose.

I. There-

²
de-
I. Therefore Parents should above all things instill this into their Children very early ; how necessary it is, and how much it becomes them to be humble: And that by no means they grow conceited of their own parts or understanding; but be desirous to learn of every one, with simplicity and meekness, without any other design but to know their Duty.

II. This we may be sure would dispose them to receive benefit by the holy Scriptures, and by all other good instructions:
For

160 *A qualification*

For it is the very qualification which *Christ* requires to make a person fit to be one of his Disciples, *That he first become like a little Child*, Matth. 18. 3.
There is no good to be done upon him in *Christ's* School, unless he first learn to be humble, subject to his Teachers, simple-hearted, and without guile, contented with a little, heartily in love with those that take care of him. And when he is thus freed from Pride, Ambition, desire of Riches, or any thing else but only of Knowledge (as little Children naturally are, till the Seeds of those Vices be stirred

to receive benefit. 161

stirred up in them by others) he will be a fit soil to receive *Christ's* heavenly Doctrine.

III. And doubtless he had reason to say it, who told this Nation long ago, That it is for want of acquainting Childhood and Youth with such plain Rules as this (which the Scripture it self delivers for our right understanding it) that the Scripture either seems obscure and difficult to them, or that they mistake it, where it seems evident.

IV. For when they grow to Mens Estate, or are engaged in worldly business

162 *A qualification*

business, or come to honour, before they be acquainted with the Holy Scripture, and especially these plain directions which it gives us for our profiting by it: one of these three things is the consequence of it. The seeming difficulty of the Scripture either makes them to seek for other Rules which they apprehend more easie; or, secondly, not to care for any Rule of Faith at all; or else, thirdly, to transform this (which God hath given for the renewing his Image in them) into the nature of their corrupt affections.

V. Let

to receive benefit. 163

V. Let this Lesson therefore, as He advises, of *becoming like little Children*, thoroughly be planted in the hearts of Children, and then *Knowledge* in other parts of Scripture will grow up with them: and Faith thus planted in Humility, while their hearts are tender, (and easie to be wrought on by this plain and familiar Precept) will take deep root, and increase more and more, as they do, in strength and stature. For though at the first their Faith be but as a grain of Mustard-seed, yet having in the Spring-time got the start of Pride

H

and

164 *A qualification*

and desire of worldly Wealth, or Greatness, it will afterward flourish in all Heavenly Knowledge, and fructifie in every good word and work.

VI. And above all other pieces of *Humility*, it is absolutely necessary that Children be brought up to a great *Reverence* of *God's Ministers*; and a high Opinion of their Calling, Place, and Persons. If Parents or Guardians would teach them to honour them as their Spiritual Fathers, and to look upon them as men appointed by God to take care of their best part, their immortal

to receive benefit. 165

mortal Souls; and to bring
Divine Blessings to them;
If they would tell them,
Children, These are the men
by whom you are Baptized
and made Christians; by
these you must therefore
be instructed, and confirmed
also in Religion, and assu-
red more and more of God's
blessing: It would have a
mighty effect upon them,
and dispose them for all
the good they may here-
after reap by them.
Whereas, those words of
reproach or undervaluing
which they now daily
hear, must needs have the
quite contrary effect: or
at least for want of such
Admonitions, and frequent

H 2 incul-

166 *A qualification, &c.*

inculcating the respect,
honour and esteem which
is due to God's Ministers,
they mind so little what
they say, that when they
become capable of it, they
receive no benefit by their
labours.

A short

A short Prayer for the
Morning.

A Almighty and most merciful Father, I most humbly bow down my self before Thee, to worship Thy Divine Majesty; by whom I was brought into the World, and have been preserved and provided for all my Life long, and now this last night, (blessed be Thy Goodness) protected from all dangers; and raised up in Health and Safety to see the Light of another Day.

168 A short Prayer

I thank Thee, O Lord,
for these and all the rest of
thy Mercies; especially for
thy singular Love in Christ
Jesus: beseeching Thee to
awaken and preserve in me
such a lively sense thereof,
that I may never prove un-
grateful to Him; but con-
stantly do Him all faithful
Service.

Particularly this Day I
earnestly implore the assistance
of His Holy Spirit, to enable
me to keep those Vows that
are upon me, not to follow nor
be led by Worldly and Carnal
Lusts, but to obey thy Holy
Will and Commandments;
and to walk in the same all the
Days of my Life.

Help

for the Morning. 169

Help me, good Lord, in my place and condition, to perform my Duty towards Thee, and towards my Neighbour, with such Care Fidelity, and Chearfulness, that I may with some confidence present my self again before Thee in the Evening; and comfortably hope for thy continued good Providence over me.

To which I humbly recommend Thy Church and Household; beseeching Thee to keep it in Thy true Religion, and to defend it evermore by thy mighty Power through Jesus Christ our Lord. In whose most blessed Name and words

170 A short Prayer

I still beseech thee to be merciful to me, and to all thy People, saying, Our Father, &c,

A short Prayer for the Evening.

I Thank thee, O Lord of Heaven and Earth, that by thy merciful Providence, I am here prostrate again before thee; not only in Health and Safety of Body; but in integrity of Heart, I hope, and with sincere purposes to continue always thy faithful Servant.

Pardon, O most merciful Father, whatsoever, I have
done

for the Evening. 171

done or omitted this Day,
contrary to my resolutions and
obligations. Pity my great
weaknesses; and accept of my
honest endeavours to keep a
good Conscience void of of-
fence towards thee, and to-
wards Man.

Which that I may do every
day better and better, vouch-
safe me the assistance of thy
special Grace, to strengthen
me in the performance of all
my Duty. That where I
have been wont to slip, I may
be more watchful: and where
I have been negligent, I may
use the greater diligence;
and so continue thy Child, a
lively Member of Christ, and
an inheritor of thy Heavenly
Kingdom.

H 5

And

172 A Short Prayer

And hear the Prayers of Thy whole Church, which have been made this Day for every Member of the same: especially for our Sovereign Lord the King; for all that minister under him in Holy or Civil things; for all that are distressed in mind, body, or estate; beseeching Thee to dispense Thy Graces and Blessings to everyone of them, suitable to their several necessities.

And be my merciful Protector all this Night; and, after a refreshing Rest, raise me up again in the Morning with a thankful heart to thee, for thy care over me; fully resolved continually to mortify all my evil and corrupt Affections,

for the Evening. 173

Affections, and daily to proceed in all Vertue and Godliness of living, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. In whose Name and Words I commend my self to thy mercy, saying,

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for one of riper years before the receiving of Baptism.

O Lord, the Creator of the World, and Redeemer of Mankind, I fall down before thee, to acknowledge that I am Thine; and to beseech Thee, though I have offended Thee, to receive me into thy Service again.

H 6

Pardon

174 . A Prayer

Pardon, good Lord, all the
Follies of my Childhood, with
all the Sins, Negligences and
Ignorances of my riper Years.
Let them all be done away in
that Fountain, which thou
hast set open for us to wash
in, and be clean.

I desire to be admitted
thither; and intend there
to devote my self intirely to
Thee, renouncing the Devil,
the World, and the Flesh;
and resolving obediently to
keep thy Holy Will and
Commandments, and to walk
in the same all the days of my
Life.

Vouchsafe me, O Lord,
the assistance of thy Holy
Spirit, that I may both se-
riously make, and faithfully
keep

before Baptism. 175

keep those holy Vows and Promises. Preserve in me a perpetual remembrance of them; that I may never, by any Sin, lose so great a Grace as thou intendest to bestow upon me; but always continue a lively Member of Christ, and an Heir of His Heavenly Kingdom. To which I beseech thee at last to bring me, through the Merits of Christ Jesus. Amen.

A

A Prayer for one that intends to be Confirmed.

O Most blessed God, by whose Grace I was called into a state of Salvation when I was baptized, and from whom cometh every good thought, desire, and purpose, which I have since felt in my heart; assist me, I beseech Thee, in the new dedication, which I am going to make of my self unto Thee, whose I am, and resolve to be to the end of my Days.

Fill me, O Lord, with such a lively sense of the honour thou dost me in admitting me into thy Service;
that

A Prayer for, &c. 177

that I may give up my self, not only with the full, but with the most chearful consent of my heart, to believe and do whatsoever thou wouldst have me.

And then be pleased to confirm me in thy Grace, and to strengthen me with might by Thy Holy Spirit in the inner Man; that I may ever discern and chuse, and follow those things which are acceptable in thy sight.

Arm me, good Lord, against all the Temptations of the World, the Flesh and the Devil: with a Will stedfastly resolved never to yield to any of them; but to persist faithfully in the performance of my Vow, which was made
in

178 A Prayer after
in my name when I was Ba-
ptized, and which I now in-
tend with my own mouth to
ratifie openly before thy
Church. Whose devout Pray-
ers I beseech thee to hear for
me, through Jesus Christ our
Lord, Amen.

A Prayer after Confir-
mation.

A Almighty and Everli-
ving God, who hast
vouchsafed to regenerate me
by Water and the Holy
Ghost; and also hast farther
certified me, by the hands
of

Confirmation. 179

of thy Minister lately laid
on me, of thy favour and
gracious Goodness towards
me: Accept, I most hum-
bly beseech thee, of my
heartly thanks for such great
and undeserved Benefits,
and continue in me those
good thoughts, desires and
purposes which I found then
in my heart to persist in
faithful Obedience to thee for
ever.

For which end be pleased
daily to impart unto me more
and more of thy Holy Spirit,
to preserve me in thy Fear
and Love; and to inable me
to do all the rest of my Duty;
not only towards thee, but
towards my Neighbour: E-
specially to those by whom, as
thy

180 A Prayer after, &c.

Thy Stewards; Thy Heavenly Mysteries are conveyed to us, that reverently attending to their Instructions, and receiving their Godly Admonitions, and obediently following their Guidance and Direction, I may be finally owned for one of thy good and faithful Servants, at that day, when the great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls shall appear again to our Salvation. To Him, with Thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be Eternal Praises. Amen.

They that need Prayers for other particular occasions, may be furnished in a Book called, *The Devout Christian*, &c.

THE END.

The Contents.

CHAP. I. Of the Duty
Page 1

Chap. II. Of the necessity of
this Duty. .X. p. 5

Chap. III. Of the Ends for
which it was instituted.

Chap. IV. Of Preparation
for it. .IX. p. 11

Chap. V. A Prayer for
that Morning when you

intend to receive. Which
may be used any time
before. p. 32

Chap. VI. The manner of
Receiving. p. 38

Chap.

The Contents.

Chap. VII. *Meditations
and Prayers afterwards*
p. 65

Chap. VIII. *Directions
for a Godly Life, suitable
to this Holy Communion.*
p. 78

Chap. IX. *Toucbing doubts
and scruples.* p. 90

Chap. X. *Directions in
case of frequent Relapses
into Sin.* p. 100

Chap. XI. *The Duties of
Children.* p. 108

Chap. XII. *The Duties of
Servants.* p. 115

Chap. XIII. *Advices to all
Young Persons.* p. 124

Chap. XIV. *Directions a-
bout them that cannot read.*
p. 131

Chap.

The Contents.

Chap. XV. *Directions to those that can read.* p. 140

Chap. XVI. *A necessary qualification to receive benefit by all this.* p. 158

A short Prayer for the Morning. p. 167

A short Prayer for the Evening. p. 170

A Prayer for one of riper Years before the receiving of Baptism. p. 173

A Prayer for one that intends to be Confirmed.

p. 176

A Prayer after Confirmation.

p. 178

The End.

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